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## **A Myth's Genesis: the Metamorphosis of Conomark, original of Perrault's Bluebeard, and the prophecy of a father-killer**

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**Abstract:** Varying opinions have been expressed regarding the famous individual commonly known as Bluebeard, the most perfect model of cruelty that ever trod the earth. «Charles Perrault, who, about 1660, had the merit of composing the first biography of this seigneur, made him an accomplished villain. He may, perhaps, have been prejudiced against his hero. He would not have been the first example of a poet or historian who liked to darken the colours of his pictures. I had long suspected that Bluebeard was the victim of a similar fatality»[1]. If Anatole France has questioned the veracity of the legend, suggesting that, like Macbeth, Bluebeard has been the victim of a slanderous history, I am persuaded, for my own part, that the celebrated wife-killer has been much misunderstood by Perrault, who was incapable of appreciating the grandeur of a pre-medieval character of folklore, and finished by consigning him to history as a mere ogre. Through the analysis of the genesis of his myth, he will appear in a very different light, not only as a victim of bad exposure, but acting in self-defence and a person defending himself is often justified in killing.

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